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MEDIA RELEASE

URGENT ACTION NEEDED ON HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGY

The Australian Association of Psychologists (AAPi) has welcomed the Mental Health Workforce Strategy but has called for urgent action on its recommendations.

"This report is yet another in a long line that stresses the overwhelming need for our mental health system to be much better," said AAPi Executive Director, Tegan Carrison.

"It needs to be more accessible, more affordable and far better equipped to cope with the extraordinary mental health demand so evident across Australian communities. We have solutions that could be actioned immediately to ease the pressure on both clients and on psychologists.

"While we welcome the 500 new internships for provisional psychologists, we again call for the 8000 plus provisional psychologists nationally to be able to provide their services under Medicare which would make access more affordable for thousands of clients.

"We continue to call for an increase in the Medicare rebate to \$150 for all psychology sessions, and the elimination of the two-tier system* which sees clients of clinical psychologists receive a higher rebate than those of registered psychologists for the same service."

Ms Carrison pointed out there was a 32% shortfall in mental health workers when compared to the 2019 National Mental Health Service Planning Framework target, and this shortfall is expected to grow to 42% by 2030 if current shortages are not addressed.

*Clients of registered psychologists are rebated \$92.90 for a 50-minute session, while clients of clinical psychologists are rebated at \$136.36 for the same service.

About AAPi

AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for all psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate grassroots psychologists, AAPi's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services.

For more information visit www.aapi.org.au

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